

1942

## The Metaphysical Amorist

J. V. Cunningham

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## POETRY

### SIX POEMS

#### THE METAPHYSICAL AMORIST

My dear, there is disparity  
Between the problems that we sense  
In context of experience  
And the abstracted forms we pose  
When we explain what they may be.  
This is a theme obscured in prose,  
And much abused in poetry.

You are the problem I propose,  
The text I would expound and glose:—  
I call you, for convenience, love.

By definition you're a cause  
Inferred by necessary laws—  
You are so to the saints above.  
But in this shadowy lower life  
I sleep with a terrestrial wife  
And earthly children I beget.  
Love is a fiction I must use,  
A privilege I may abuse,  
And sometimes something I forget.  
Now, in the heavenly other place  
Love is, in the eternal mind,  
The luminous form whose shade she is,  
A ghost discarnate, thought defined.  
She was so in my early bliss;  
She is so while I comprehend

The forms my senses apprehend;  
And in the end she will be so.

Her whom my hands embrace I kiss;  
Her whom my mind infers I know.  
The one exists in time and space  
And as she was she will not be;  
The other is in her own grace  
And is *She is* eternally.

Plato, you shall not plague my life!  
I married a terrestrial wife.  
And Hume, she is not mere sensation  
In sequence of observed relation!  
She has two forms. (Ah, thank you, Duns!)  
I know her in both ways at once.  
I knew her, yes, before I knew her,  
And by both means I must construe her,  
And none among you shall undo her.

EPIGRAMS

1.  
I know not what I am. I think I know  
Much of the circumstance in which I flow.  
But knowledge is not power. I am that flow  
Of history and of percept which I know.
2.  
Deep summer, and time pauses. Sorrow wastes  
To a new sorrow. While time heals time hastes.
3.  
The dry soul rages. The unfeeling feel  
With the dry vehemence of the unreal.  
So I in the Idea of your arms, unwon!  
Am, as the real in the unreal, undone.
4.  
Things hasten to their end. If life and love  
Seem slow, it is their end we're ignorant of.